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DEFENDANT SENTENCED IN CASE INVOLVING BRIBERY AND FRAUD SCHEME IN AMERICAN SAMOA

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The former Director of the American Samoa Department of Procurement has been sentenced to eight months in federal prison and fined \$5,000 on charges of conspiring to commit bribery and fraud concerning federal programs, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division announced today.

Fa'au Seumanutafa of Pago Pago, American Samoa was sentenced by the Honorable David Alan Ezra at U.S. District Court in Honolulu on Monday. In addition to the prison sentence and fine, Seumanutafa was ordered to pay \$80,000 restitution to the government of American Samoa. Seumanutafa, had previously pleaded guilty to one count of conspiring to commit bribery and fraud concerning federal programs, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 371.

The charges against Seumanutafa stem from his role in a conspiracy to pre-set the prices on several federally-funded American Samoa Department of Education contracts for bookshelves and library furniture for American Samoa schools. Seumanutafa used his official position to approve and submit for payment from the American Samoa Department of Treasury numerous false purchase orders for which he received at least \$80,000.

Seumanutafa is the first of four defendants to be sentenced in the government's investigation into bribery and fraud in American Samoa.

In a related case, Toetu Solaita, former Program Director of the American Samoa School Lunch Program, is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge Ezra on Oct. 6, 2005. Solaita previously pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaii to one count of conspiring to commit fraud concerning federal programs, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 371. The charges against Solaita stem from his role in a conspiracy to steal more than \$68,000 worth of food and goods from the American Samoa School Lunch Program. Solaita admitted that he used his official position to approve his and his coconspirators' theft of food and goods purchased by the School Lunch Program that were supposed to have been used for feeding children in the American Samoa Public School System.

In another related case, Patolo Mageo, former Director of the American Samoa Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), is scheduled to be sentenced by the Honorable Helen Gillmor on Oct. 17, 2005. Mageo previously pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaii to one count of conspiring to commit bribery and fraud concerning federal programs, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 371. The charges against Mageo stem from his role in a conspiracy to fraudulently award DHSS contracts. Mageo admitted that he defrauded the DHSS of at least \$40,000 by fraudulently awarding several federally-funded construction contracts for the Women, Infants and Children government building and other contracts for DHSS. Mageo further admitted that he used his official position as Director to

approve the fraudulent award of other federally-funded contracts in exchange for at least \$10,000.

On Oct. 17, 2005, Kerisano Sili Sataua, former Director of the American Samoa Department of Education (ASDOE), is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge Ezra. Sataua previously pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court for the District of Hawaii to one count of conspiring to commit bribery and fraud concerning federal programs, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 371. Sataua admitted that he fraudulently awarded federally-funded ASDOE contracts to his co-conspirators and their companies in exchange for his co-conspirators providing him with over \$9,000 in cash and goods. Further, Sataua admitted that he stole and misappropriated food and goods from the School Lunch Program that were supposed to have been used for feeding children in the American Samoa Public School System.

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Seumanutafa, Solaita, Mageo, and Sataua prosecutions are the first public corruption cases to be prosecuted by federal officials for conduct in American Samoa.

These cases are being prosecuted by trial attorneys James A. Crowell IV and Daniel Schwager of the Public Integrity Section at the U.S. Department of Justice, Criminal Division – headed by Section Chief Noel L. Hillman – and investigated by the Honolulu Office of the FBI, the Department of Education Office of Inspector General, and the Department of Interior Office of Inspector General.

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